



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BOOK REVIEWS.

PRESENT PHILOSOPHICAL TENDENCIES: A Critical Survey of Naturalism, Idealism, Pragmatism, and Realism, Together with a Synopsis of the Philosophy of William James. By Ralph Barton Perry. New York: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1912. Pp. xv, 383.

This work, as the author says in his Preface, is not intended primarily to be descriptive or historical but rather is critical (p. vii). Naturalism, idealism, and pragmatism are discussed and criticized from the point of view of realism, which is stated constructively in the last part. It is scarcely worth while to inquire whether Professor Perry's account of the theories he rejects is in all respects fair, for in the nature of the case the matter cannot be decided. Throughout the book the discussion is of contemporary problems,—problems which none of us views in historical perspective,—and therefore the criterion of objective statement and criticism does not exist. If Professor Perry esteems slightly a theory which the idealist esteems highly, the latter naturally thinks that idealism is put in a false light by Professor Perry's summary treatment of the point. On general principles one is as likely to be right as the other. On one vital point, however, there is no room for difference of opinion; every criticism in the book is manifestly fair in intent. No one who finds his own convictions criticized will have the least ground for objecting to the spirit of the criticism. The author has endeavored to find the strength as well as the weakness of the views which he rejects. He has not only a broad but a thorough knowledge of the writings of his opponents and his motive is manifestly only the desire to get at the truth. To this he adds great clearness both of thought and expression. Criticism undertaken in this admirable spirit and with so much seriousness of purpose is the best fate that can befall any philosophical theory.

The book shows throughout the same interest in the bearing of realism upon religion that appears in Professor Perry's other writings. The antithesis of theory and belief, and of science and religion, forms the basis upon which in his introduction the author distinguishes the four philosophical tendencies which he

treats. Naturalism represents an exclusive devotion to science, while idealism represents an equally exclusive and often romantic devotion to religion. Pragmatism and realism are latter-day efforts to mediate between the two and to mitigate the narrowness of each. Pragmatism leans in a general way toward idealism and "is never far removed from dogmatic anthropomorphism." Realism shares with naturalism the regard for the rigorous methods and exact results of science, but it escapes an exclusive regard for physical fact (pp. 39f.).

There is a good deal of what Professor Perry himself calls pseudo-simplicity in this introduction. The antithesis between theory and belief is made a good deal sharper and clearer than it actually is, and the working relations between the two are not discussed as they should be. Moreover, the relations of the four tendencies in philosophy to science and religion are by no means so simple as Professor Perry represents them. A more profound consideration of this question appears to be essential if realism is to be presented as a mediator between the facts of science and the hopes of religion. Indeed, it is scarcely too much to say that the greatest defect in the general structure of the book is its failure to follow up this problem, as the introduction seems to promise. The last chapter on "A Realistic Philosophy of Life," where one expects this promise to be finally fulfilled, is really the least maturely considered in the book. Much of what Professor Perry urges against Mr. Russell's pessimistic outlook upon civilization has no connection whatever with realism (cf. p. 347); it consists merely in pointing out the possibility that the universe may contain more than Mr. Russell's science has yet discovered. On the other hand, realism seems to have some special difficulties in playing the rôle that Professor Perry assigns to it. It is not enough to point out that "there is no reason why an identical process should not obey many laws, and laws of different types" (p. 342), and that therefore the same act may be mechanical in one phase and teleological in another. Even the fact that some processes are considered in both lights does not go far toward justifying religious hopes. These hopes will hardly be satisfied with any position short of a subordination of mechanism to teleology, and it does not appear how realism can supply such a faith. The most that Professor Perry really claims is that his philosophy justifies the acceptance of mechanism *and* teleology. Upon

realistic grounds one would have to say that the one set of relations is 'over and above' the other. And on empirical grounds, the generality and permanence of the mechanical relations give them a great handicap over the teleological ones, so far as hope is concerned.

Since Professor Perry's criticisms are all from the point of view of realism, one's interest naturally centers in the part of the book where he develops his own theory constructively. One finds here, however, as Professor Perry himself says, that one is still largely in the realm of criticism. About half of the whole section on realism is devoted to "A Realistic Theory of Mind" and a large portion of this chapter is taken up with showing that consciousness is not exclusive. Considering Professor Perry's intention to present realism in its religious implications, it would have been quite natural had he discussed the non-exclusiveness of consciousness with reference to the conception of personality or individuality. It seems that the realist has some special difficulties here. Minds are not exclusive, it is held; the content of one mind may be content also of another. A given content may be more easily possessed by one mind than by another, but this is due only to what may be called advantages of position; nobody can have quite the same chance to know my organic sensations as I have. The difference between my mind and yours, then, appears to be merely the difference between the contents that have got into one and not into the other, which certainly seems to be an extremely formal way of expressing the difference between two radically distinct kinds of person. Or is it to be understood that there are different types of experiencing relation? Or perhaps every experience is an unique relation. Consciousness is not creative; is it also not distinctive, in the sense that my awareness is precisely like every other person's? A similar question, it is clear, may be asked about one consciousness in its different modes. Is the "relation characteristic of consciousness" the same when one desires as when one merely knows. Apparently Professor Perry regards it so, for the same symbol is used to express both (p. 333), and the difference between desiring and knowing is put into the terms. We have then a 'desiring subject,' a 'finding subject,' and presumably indefinitely many other subjects, as many, that is, as there are nuances of subjective nature. Now, all these subjects are, of course, independent of the 'relation

characteristic of consciousness,' with the result that if I desire something, it requires a further 'relation characteristic of consciousness' to enable me to know that I desire it. Professor Perry maintains in his final chapter that "in a sense every individual is morally a law to himself," and also that consciousness is not impotent (pp. 343ff.). It does not appear, however, that either position is derived especially from his realism.

When we pass beyond these criticisms of the theory of exclusiveness to the realist definition of mind, we find the following: "Elements become mental content *when reacted to in the specific manner characteristic of the central nervous system*," (p. 299); "Content of mind must be defined as *that portion of the surrounding environment which is taken account of by the organism in serving its interests*" (p. 300). One hesitates to criticize these definitions because the exposition of them is so brief that one feels no assurance that one has understood exactly what they mean. In the case of the first, however, it seems clear that whatever difficulties there are in defining consciousness are turned over wholesale to the nervous system; mind simply is the thing which the nervous system selects. This would be more enlightening if we did not know vastly more about consciousness than we do about the nervous system. Moreover, the use of the term 'selection' in this connection is not self-explanatory. The nervous system can hardly be said literally to select part of the objects which surround one. One suspects that the phrase 'to select in the specific manner of the nervous system' is at bottom a roundabout way of saying that consciousness is consciousness. The second definition, aside from the fact that it seems not to be descriptive of what one ordinarily means by mind, is especially difficult because Professor Perry does not give any explanation whatever of interest. It is said to be used in the biological sense rather than the psychological, but whether this is regarded as part of the realistic method or is only the accidental choice of an example does not appear. So far as the example is concerned, interest is identified with the impulse to self-preservation, though other 'special' interests are mentioned. Interest is distinguished from the nervous system, though together with the nervous system it constitutes the 'action of the mind' (p. 304). Apparently interest is an ultimate which cannot be explained, but it certainly ought to be defined.

The realistic theory of knowledge claims as an advantage over

other theories that it abolishes the dualism of mind and body, thought and things (p. 308). Thought is a peculiar kind of relation among things, not a different substance. But here again one sometimes feels that the realist is throwing too great a burden upon a phrase. It is perfectly possible to offer a solution of dualism in realistic terms that is quite as formal as that given by subjectivism. In fact, one suspects that the realist sometimes makes an identification of thought and things that is in all respects as vicious as that of which he accuses the idealist. In the present instance, this appears in the somewhat halting treatment that Professor Perry gives to the distinction between knowledge and experience. Professor Dewey's restriction of the term knowledge to intellectualized experience he apparently regards as only a peculiarity of terminology, and pragmatism is charged with a 'disparagement' of concepts (pp. 225ff.). Later the distinction between mediate and immediate knowledge is recognized (pp. 326f.), but one feels that an inherent difficulty is constantly slurred over by calling both 'knowledge' indiscriminately. More particularly, there is no explanation whatever of meaning in the case of mediate knowledge, and surely the explanation of this point is precisely the crux of the realistic position. "It [the idea] is an idea of something by virtue of the fact that it is connected through my plans or expectations with some portion of the environment" (p. 327). But the content of mind is itself only a selected portion of the environment. Does Professor Perry mean that one portion of the environment is connected with another portion? Doubtless it is, but this is hardly a description of meaning. So far as the truth of mediate knowledge is concerned, the criterion is said to be simply the success or failure of my plans (p. 327).

The same identification of thought and things seems to lie at the bottom also of Professor Perry's argument about external relations and the method of analysis. "The method of analysis presupposes that the nature and arrangement of the parts supplies the character of the whole." Otherwise "analysis and description by specification would not constitute knowledge at all" (p. 319). The only alternative to the method of analysis so interpreted is to be "content with an immediate or mystical apprehension" of a whole. But what force has this argument unless 'constituting knowledge' is taken as virtually identical with 'constituting the thing known'? By means of abstractions I

may properly be said to know a complicated whole, but there is surely no reason for saying that the concrete thing is made out of abstractions, unless indeed I think of the elements of my knowledge as also the elements of being, and unless I assume that in analyzing it I am actually taking it apart into its constituent parts. It is a truism that the nature of a whole is not merely the sum of the characters of the parts. But is it not also true that, as a matter of experience, the total, concrete nature of the whole is prior to the *dissecta membra* of analysis? This fact does not appear essentially more 'mysterious' than any other fact of experience, and it does not even render it especially mysterious that conceptual analysis should enlighten experience, provided one has considered the relations between conceptual knowledge and experience. Realism, of course, does not admit all of these propositions and no doubt we have to do here with two widely divergent points of view. The test, however, is this: A concrete whole being given, is it not easier for logic to explain the existence and nature of elements, aspects, abstracted conceptions, than it is for metaphysics, assuming the existence of abstractions, to construct concreteness out of them? The method of analysis as interpreted by Professor Perry has no claim to self-evidence. Like any other useful principle, it can create fallacy if it is taken without criticism or qualification. Professor Perry, I believe, corrupts the principle of analysis and turns it into a fallacy by a process essentially similar to that by which another useful principle gives rise to what he calls the 'speculative dogma' (pp. 64ff.).

GEORGE H. SABINE.

Leland Stanford, Jr., University.

DEVELOPMENT AND PURPOSE: An Essay Toward a Philosophy of Evolution. By L. T. Hobhouse. London: Macmillan & Co., 1913. Pp. xxix, 383.

Professor Hobhouse's book is planned on a fine broad scheme and carried out with impressive power and judgment. It is a book perhaps rather for the general student of philosophy than for the specialist in ethics, but assuredly it ought not to be neglected by the latter. In the main, contention is bound up with a profound belief in the importance of ends, and the all-importance of reason and rational method in the conduct of life.